

## Public Discourse

When asked about the extent to which they thought that public discourse shapes political and legislative decisions, 37.5% of respondents noted that this is generally the case, while 12.5% declared that this is almost always the case. The remainder 50% of respondents answered as follows:

- 20.8% noted that public discourse sometimes shapes political and legislative decisions;
- 20.8% noted that public discourse rarely shapes political and legislative decisions;
- 4.2% noted that public discourse almost never shapes political and legislative decisions; and
- 4.2% refused to answer the question.

Participants were then asked to assess the significance of *mainstream news outlets*, *politicians*, *non-governmental organisations (NGOs)* and *citizens* in setting the topics in public discourse (please see Table 6 below). Politicians (30.4%) and mainstream news outlets (21.7%) were deemed to be most significant, whilst NGOs and citizens were thought to be of least significance in setting public discourse.

**Table 6** Significance in Setting the Topics in Public Discourse

	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Neither Significant, Nor Insignificant	Somewhat Insignificant	Insignificant
<b>Mainstream News Outlets</b>	21.7%	30.4%	26.1%	13.0%	8.7%
<b>Politicians</b>	30.4%	21.7%	13.0%	26.1%	8.7%
<b>NGOs</b>	0%	30.4%	52.2%	17.4%	0%
<b>Citizens</b>	0%	30.4%	39.1%	8.7%	21.7%

Respondents were also asked to assess the significance of *mainstream news outlets*, *politicians*, *non-governmental organisations (NGOs)* and *citizens* in determining how issues are treated in public discourse (please see Table 7). Citizens (4.3%) and NGOs (0%) were deemed to be of least significance, while mainstream news outlets (39.1%) were regarded as most significant, followed by politicians (30.4%).

**Table 7** *Significance in Determining How Issues are Treated in Public Discourse*

	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Somewhat Significant</b>	<b>Neither Significant, Nor Insignificant</b>	<b>Somewhat Insignificant</b>	<b>Insignificant</b>
<b>Mainstream News Outlets</b>	39.1%	34.8%	13.0%	0%	13.0%
<b>Politicians</b>	30.4%	26.1%	8.7%	21.7%	13.0%
<b>NGOs</b>	0%	21.7%	56.5%	17.4%	4.3%
<b>Citizens</b>	4.3%	26.1%	39.1%	21.7%	8.7%